

Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

courage is contagious

Viewing cable 05LIMA4983, COUNTERING CHAVEZ IN PERU

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#05LIMA4983**.

| Reference ID | Created | Released | Classification | Origin |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| 05LIMA4983 | 2005-11-22 22:00 | 2011-08-30 01:44 | CONFIDENTIAL | Embassy Lima |

Appears in these articles:

[elcomercio.com](#)

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 LIMA 004983

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/18/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [ENRG](#) [PE](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: COUNTERING CHAVEZ IN PERU

REF: A. LIMA 4569

[1](#)B. LIMA 4521

[1](#)C. LIMA 4420

[1](#)D. LIMA 4271

...

id: 45879

date: 11/22/2005 22:00

refid: 05LIMA4983

origin: Embassy Lima

classification: CONFIDENTIAL

destination: 04LIMA5757|05LIMA2304|05LIMA2551|05LIMA3175|05LIMA359|05LIMA4132|05LIMA4271|05LIMA4420|05LIMA4521|05LIMA4569

header:

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

----- header ends -----

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 LIMA 004983

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/18/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [ENRG](#) [PE](#) [VE](#)

SUBJECT: COUNTERING CHAVEZ IN PERU

REF: A. LIMA 4569

[1](#)B. LIMA 4521

[1](#)C. LIMA 4420

[1](#)D. LIMA 4271

[1](#)E. LIMA 4132

[1](#)F. MONSERRATE-MARGULIES EMAIL 9/17/05

[1](#)G. LIMA 3175

[1](#)H. LIMA 2551

[1](#)I. LIMA 2304

[1](#)J. LIMA 359

[1](#)K. 04 LIMA 5757

Classified By: Political Counselor Alexander Margulies. Reason: 1.4(c,d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez is actively seeking to project his "Bolivarian Revolution" to Peru politically, institutionally (via Venezuela's membership in the Andean Community and South American Community of Nations), commercially (energy integration and offers of

development funding), and covertly (support for far-left parties and to the fascistic Ollanta Humala). Peru should be fertile ground for Chavez, populist and anti-systemic message; the poverty rate is 52 percent, and INR,s recent region-wide poll shows that distrust of government institutions and dissatisfaction with the fruits of democracy is the highest in the Andean region. This cable analyzes the &wedge issues8 that have prevented Chavez from broadening his support here, and notes some areas where he could gain ground. It also lists groups that we view as our potential allies in blocking the spread of &Bolivarianismo8 in this country. END SUMMARY.

WHO ARE CHAVEZ'S "ALLIES" IN PERU?

12. (C) Embassy sources, GOP officials and media reportage indicate that the Venezuelan Embassy has been very active in organizing "Bolivarian" events, attempting to engender support for "Bolivarianism" among leftist parties and organizations, sponsoring the travel of students and youth leaders to Venezuela, and providing funding (perhaps through the Cuban Embassy) to far-left parties and Ollanta Humala's fascistic Nationalist Peruvian Party (Refs D-E). The Venezuelan Embassy may become smoother and more effective at these influence operations with the recent arrival of new Ambassador Cruz Manuel Martinez Ramirez, reportedly a Chavez confidante. Martinez replaces a Charge d'Affaires whose effectiveness was blunted by her stridency. Despite its efforts, the GOV has not/not had noticeable success in fostering "Boliivarianism" here, with disappointing attendance at rallies and minimal pro-Chavez activism on the part of its erstwhile allies.

13. (C) One reason is that the overwhelming majority of Peruvians reject the local partners cultivated by Chavez. By alternately offering and withholding financial support, Chavez is aiming to build a brown-red coalition to contest Peru,s 2006 elections. The country's unreconstructed Stalinists and Maoists, who represent the red integer in the equation, enjoy minimal popular support, are led by veteran political has-beens, and are tarred in the court of public opinion by their historic linkages to the Sendero Luminoso and MRTA terrorist organizations. Brown shirt Ollanta Humala, according to recent polls, is doing much better. He may have as much as a 10-12 percent nationwide following, centered in the long-neglected southern and highland departments. Like Evo Morales in Bolivia, Humala is trying to moderate his image in order to broaden his appeal. The Humala threat should not be dismissed; he has a good prospect of winning enough seats (up to 10 percent) to be a disruptive force in the next Congress, but a minuscule chance of winning the Presidency or imposing his policy agenda.

GOP OPPOSITION TO CHAVEZ

14. (C) President Alejandro Toledo, in private comments to USG officials, has made it clear that he, along with Colombian President Alvaro Uribe, are the South American leaders most opposed to Chavez's ideology, initiatives and methods. Publicly, Toledo has not hesitated to stand up to Chavez's antics in international fora, such as the South American Community of Nations Summit (Ref C). The GOP promotes free markets, foreign direct investment, a free trade agreement with the U.S., and private-sector-led growth. Consequently, it rejects Chavez's statist prescriptions for national and regional development, as evidenced by Peru's dismissive response towards the Petroandina initiative (Ref B).

A HOSTILE POLITICAL CLASS

15. (C) Peru's political class largely shares the Toledo Government's hostility towards Chavez and his "Bolivarian" revolution. The center-right rejects his left-wing politics and statist economics, which they equate with the disastrous policies implemented by the 1968-75 leftist military Velasco regime. The center-left rejects Chavez's authoritarianism and militarism, his human rights violations, and his undermining of democratic institutions. APRA, the populist major opposition party, rejects his pretensions to regional leadership and "Bolivarianism," which conflicts with Aprismo's own pretensions to be a regional political ideology.

16. (C) For all of that, there is a risk that both APRA and the Fujimoristas may try to improve the electoral prospects of Humala. Alan Garcia and Alberto Fujimori enjoy a solid base of passionate supporters (15 to 25 percent range) but face even larger and equally passionate negatives among the electorate. The support gives them good prospects of making it to the second round of presidential elections (Fujimori by means of a stand-in candidate) but the negatives set them up to lose in a two candidate race against less disliked opponents like Valentine Paniagua or Lourdes Flores. Humala, who generates even higher negatives than Garcia or Fujimori, would be the perfect opponent in a second round contest.

ISSUES THAT COST CHAVEZ SUPPORT

17. (C) Anti-Americanism: Recent INR polling show that Peru and Colombia, where 70 percent of the population has a favorable view of the United States, are the most pro-American countries in all of South America. Chavez, attacks on President Bush resonate with many Peruvians, who are critical of perceived U.S. unilateralism. His attacks on the United States, however, do not. Most elements of U.S. policy in Peru (anti-terrorism, democracy, human rights, honesty in government, job creation through trade) touch a deep and sympathetic chord with Peruvians except those on the farthest right and left. Even many Peruvians who are critical of our anti-narcotics policies (the most controversial element of our bilateral relationship) fear the narco-terrorist link and value the U.S. assistance commitment.

18. (C) Free Trade: Support for a U.S.-Peruvian FTA has declined from nearly 70 percent to the mid 50s as GOP negotiators have complained about US inflexibility while free trade opponents mobilized. Still, hard-core opponents of a trade agreement number less than a quarter of the population. Chavez, anti-FTA and anti-FTAA message has not caught on well in a country where even most free trade critics acknowledge that preferential access to the U.S. market has driven Peru's export-led economy. Acknowledging the popularity of trade with the United States, Peru's motley coalition of FTA opponents changed their slogan a few months ago from &No to the FTA8 to a more nuanced, &FTA: Not Like This8 (TLC: Asi No).

19. (C) The Economic Model: Chavez, attacks on neo-liberalism play well to his narrow red-brown base, but meets with indifference or antipathy from the broader public. Peruvians have fairly fresh memories of hyper-inflation and a sclerotic statist economy. Orthodox policies have brought Peru record low levels of inflation, steadily declining interest rates, and the best economic growth record in decades. Venezuelan purchases of government debt evoke no interest in a country with record reserves and which is close to winning investment grade status. The Venezuelan proposal for Andean energy integration met with similar Peruvian opposition because it was predicated upon increasing the role of state companies in the sector. Prime Minister Kuczynski recently remarked privately that the Toledo government has succeeded in de-politicizing the economic model. In fact, parties from the right to center-left have embraced the present macroeconomic approach. In the same way, however, that many Peruvians complain that economic growth is not trickling down to the general populace, so Chavez has won points for his programs to fight illiteracy and provide broader medical care.

110. (C) Democracy: Chavez, traction with the left is hurt by the fact that he reminds Peruvians of Fujimori's authoritarianism. The owner of leading leftist newspaper La Republica (which is leading the charge against the FTA) has told the Ambassador that Chavez, efforts to control the press are a defining issue for him. The local and very influential Inter-American Press Society (SIP) chapter is actively critical of Chavez. Many of Peru's leading journalists are left of center, but their recent struggle against Montesinos, control of the press has colored their attitude toward Chavez. The anti-democratic tint of Chavez, allies in this country offend even regular critics of the U.S. among the democratic left. Despite a lack of sympathy for Chavez among media owners and editors, he does make good copy. Most papers have a quarter to half a page every Monday quoting his colorful attacks during "Alo Presidente" of the day before against regional leaders or their policies.

ISSUES AND MEASURES TO COUNTER CHAVEZ

111. (C) In sum, we have a positive basis in Peru that we can build on to effectively counter Chavez's influence here and in regional organizations. We propose to:

-- encourage President Toledo, Prime Minister Kuczynski and other GOP officials to maintain their general policy of engagement, containment and damage control, while being prepared to ratchet-up protests should evidence be uncovered tying Chavez to political subversion or terrorism.

-- urge Peruvian officials, business leaders and media opinion-makers to speak out in favor of the GOP's economic/trade policies and against the economic/trade policies advocated by Chavez.

-- emphasize to Peruvian officials that they need to address the dichotomy between their desire for Free Trade Agreements with the U.S. and the EU on the one hand, and Venezuela's approach to regional development in the CAN and CASA; sooner or later the GOP will have to make a choice between the two.

-- work with media contacts to publicize any evidence of Chavez's interference in internal political affairs (such as by funding extremist parties or promoting subversive activities), anti-democratic actions taken by Chavez in Venezuela (particularly against the press), and any evidence of Chavez's support for terrorist organizations in Colombia and elsewhere.

-- encourage our pro-democracy NGO, human rights and labor contacts to publicly criticize the GOV's anti-democratic actions, human rights violations, and anti-labor policies by providing them with information on Chavez's activities, as well as by promoting their engagement with Venezuelan counterparts suffering from GOV persecution.
STRUBLE

=====CABLE ENDS=====